Citizens' Voice Project

Annual Report

May 2011 – June 2012

Contract No. AID-391-C-11-00001

List of Acronyms

AASR-GT	Anjum Asim Shahid Rahman – Grant Thornton
AJ&K	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
ASP	USAID Assessment and Strengthening Program
CB	Capacity Building
CBOD	Capacity Building and Organizational Development
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COP	Chief of Party
DFID	Department for International Development
DG	Director General
EAD	Economic Affairs Division
EOI	Expression of Interest
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FCR	Frontier Crimes Regulation
GEP	USAID Gender Equity Program
GF&C	Grants, Finance and Compliance
GMC	Grants Management Committee
GMIS	Grants Management Information System
GOP	Government of Pakistan
HBL	Habib Bank Limited
HR	Human Resource
IT	Information Technology
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
KPMG	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler - Taseer Hadi & Co.
MIS	Management Information Systems
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ME&R	Monitoring, Evaluation and Research
PD&R	Program Development and Research
PKR	Pakistani Rupee
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PO	Program Officer
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTCL	Pakistan Telecommunications Company Limited
RFA	Request for Application
RFQ	Request for Quotation
TAF	The Asia Foundation
TDEA	Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TRC	Technical Review Committee
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Executive Summary

This report covers the first year of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Citizens' Voice Project from May 27, 2011 to June 30, 2012. The Project is being implemented by the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA), while the sub-contractors are The Asia Foundation (TAF) and Anjum Asim Shahid Rahman-Grant Thornton (AASR-GT).

In the first year, the Project was fully mobilized in terms of office setup, recruitments, necessary procurements, meeting post-award conditions, establishing required procedures and systems, and signing agreements with the approved sub-contractors. In particular, the grants manual and internal audit manuals were developed and implemented after required approvals within the first six months of the Project. Sub-contracts with AASR-GT and TAF were signed on August 19, 2011 and September 8, 2011 respectively, after obtaining consent of USAID. By the end of December 2011, almost all the essential staff had been recruited; and the project implementation had started in terms of solicitations, outreach and award of grants.

The Project announced its first grants cycle in November 2011, which was within the first six months of its start. By the end of the year, two grants cycles had been announced and largely implemented including 35 recommendations to the USAID for award, out of which 13 awards were made after approval of USAID in April 2012. On the part of the Project, the evaluation process included several tiers including technical reviews, pre-award assessments, review by Grants Management Committee (GMC), review by the Chief of Party, recommendations by the Project Steering Committee (PSC), and revisions of short-listed applications in the light of observations by GMC and PSC. In total, 287 applications were evaluated during the first year.

One of the important tasks under the project is to develop program descriptions either on the themes provided by the USAID or on the initiatives of project management. During the year, the Project staff carried out background research on various potential themes and developed 16 program descriptions for various grants cycle. These program descriptions covered themes like municipal sector reforms, water rights, legislative governance, energy sector reforms, citizens' voice in tax collection sector, education sector reforms, police reforms, legislative framework for non-profit organizations, and health sector. These were submitted to the USAID for approval. Out of these, 7 themes were approved by the USAID and used for solicitations through the first and second grant cycles.

The first grant cycle was announced on November 3, 2011 and the second on March 4, 2012. For both the cycles, the Project solicited applications through, among others, website, e-mail groups and newspaper advertisements. In addition, 5 information sessions, including a project-launching event in Islamabad, were organized in major cities of the country for the purpose of communication and outreach. The Project staff used these events to share information about the Project as well as information about grant cycles, especially about eligibility, evaluation criteria, proposal development, application submission process, evaluation process and approvals. The information sessions attracted significant media attention and were given wide coverage in both the electronic and print media. In total, 1210 persons, including potential grantees, attended these sessions.

In response to the two solicitations, 287 applications were received, 156 in relation to the first cycle and 131 for the second cycle. All applications were evaluated in-house including the technical reviews and programmatic pre-award assessments. AASR-GT carried out the operational pre-award assessments with focus on procurements, human resource management, finance and absorptive capacity of applicants. In total, 35 programmatic and operational pre-award assessments were carried out in the first year.

In the first year, the Project was able to develop, test and implement the Grant Management Information System (GMIS), which is the first of its kind in Pakistan and which now maintains data of all applications under different grant cycles. Steps were also taken to develop required modules to, among others, manage post award data of project's progress, grantees' reports and activity calendars. All technical evaluations and review processes were carried out online by using the GMIS.

The Project also made substantial progress in terms of capacity building of project and TDEA staff in selected areas through on-job trainings and formal workshops. It also extended technical support and advice to the TDEA management for strengthening its procedures and systems. These efforts contributed to improved risk rating of TDEA from high risk to medium risk within a year on the basis of the validation exercise carried out by USAID through Assessment and Strengthening Project (ASP). In addition, necessary preparatory work was carried out for the training of potential grantees, which included development of curriculum, training modules, and identification of consultants and trainers for delivery of training as well as other capacity building work. Actual trainings for staff members of grantee organizations also started in June 2012.

The challenges that were faced by the project included delays in finalizing sub-contracts, liquidity constraints, receipt of fewer number of grant applications, poor quality of most grant applications, delays in approvals of project themes and recommended grant applications, and time consumed in the evaluation process. However, despite these challenges, the project was fully mobilized in the first year, and significant progress was made in terms of awarding grants and preparing for efficient execution of more frequent grant cycles in the second year. The pace of award of grants is likely to increase significantly in the 2nd year as, by the end of first year, most of the challenges had been successfully addressed, all the required systems, procedures and capacities were in place, and there was greater awareness among potential grantees and other stakeholders about the project.

1. Project Mobilization

Following the signing of contract on May 27, 2011, Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA) took a range of immediate steps for efficient implementation of the project. One of these steps was to hold a planning meeting for three days on June 3-5, 2011 at Shangrilla Resort Hotel, Murree. Relevant staff of TDEA, TAF and AASR-GT participated in the meeting. They reviewed the project and developed consensus about the roles, responsibilities and future direction. Other important steps in terms of project mobilization included the following:

1.1 Post-award Orientation

TDEA staff prepared for and participated in the post-award orientation at its Secretariat on June 6, 2011 with USAID. In this meeting, the TDEA staff raised a number of questions and sought clarifications, based on their review of project documents. The USAID staff explained the project and responded to the questions of TDEA staff for the clarity of TDEA team. Several contradictions between different provisions of the contract were pointed out; and it was agreed that these will be rectified through appropriate amendments in the contract.

2.3. Progress towards Mobilization

In the initial phase, while waiting for the joining of key project personnel and recruitment of other staff, TDEA mobilized its existing staff to avoid start up delays. For this purpose, a core three-member team, which was also involved in the project development and negotiations phase, took the lead for the planning and mobilization efforts under the project. This team consisted of National Coordinator, Manager Data Centre and Manager Finance at the TDEA. In addition to the core team, an Inception Team was constituted and mobilized to ensure timely completion of tasks urgently required under the project. It consisted of six members, and its primarily task was to set up the project office and perform other mobilization functions until the relevant recruitments had been made.

2.4. Deployment of Key Personnel

Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ali, the designated Chief of Party, joined the project from June 3rd 2011 and, soon after, got involved in the planning and mobilization of the project as well as the oversight of the working of the Inception Team that had been mobilized by TDEA. Efforts were also made to identify suitable candidates for the vacant key position of Director (Monitoring, Evaluation and Research).

Other two key personnel (i.e. Director Grants and Financial Administration; and Director Capacity Building and Organizational Development) were to be recruited through TAF; and, therefore, their joining was contingent upon signing of TDEA-TAF sub-contract. TDEA explored the possibility whether TDEA-TAF sub-contract could be given retrospective effect to ensure that these key personnel could join and then be compensated from the month of June or early July 2011. However, USAID supported the process by allowing TDEA to directly recruit the two key personnel on short term basis till the execution of subcontract.

2.5. Procurements

Soon after signing the contract, TDEA made efforts to quickly identify an appropriate office for the project. After evaluating various options, an office building was identified in F-10 sector; and the lease agreement for it was signed on Thursday, June 9, 2011. The project office was later renovated and, by the end of July, it was ready for shifting. Arrangements were also made for the procurement of equipment and furniture but later these had to be dropped or altered in view of USAID communication that TDEA would be getting similar materials from the IFES office. The equipment and furniture received from IFES helped the project in the initial phase, though it still needed to procure additional materials in view of its increasing needs as well as the fact that some of the materials received from IFES were out of order or not usable. Procurement of two vehicles for office was delayed due to required administrative approvals in relation to tax exemption and waiver from requirements of source and nationality. Another important limiting factor was liquidity, as TDEA was not able to invest significant amount of funds on advance basis in this procurement. One vehicle was, therefore, hired on rental basis and is being used to manage project workload in the interim.

2.6 Post-disbursement Conditions

The TDEA Board of Trustees amended several TDEA policies on July 29, 2011, in order to meet USAID post-disbursement conditions. The Trustees approved resolutions to amend and/or insert the following policies that were either part of the post-disbursement conditions or were considered relevant for improving financial and human resource management at TDEA.

Sr. No.	Agenda Item	Nature of Insertion/Amendment
1.	Changing the post of National Coordinator	National Coordinator post was changed to Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
2.	Appointing External Auditor and Approval of 2009-2010 Audit	KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co. was appointed for the audit of TDEA accounts for the year ending June 30, 2011. Trustees also approved the audit for the preceding fiscal year.
3.	Project Independence with Oversight	Trust Deed was amended to enhance oversight of Trust projects, but also to ensure project management independence.
4.	Banking Provisions	Trust Deed and TDEA Compendium of Policies and Procedures was amended to allow credit line, open Citizens' Voice Project account, and identify signatories to operate the account.
5.	Asset Declaration of TDEA Trustees and Employees	Proactive declaration of assets, income, wealth tax returns of TDEA Trustees, employees and heads of member organizations. TDEA to update monthly transactions with vendors, etc.
6.	Human Resource Policies	Amendment 1: Permanent Staff in Categories of Employment Amendment 2: Review of Levels of Appointment Amendment 3: Amendments in Elements of Salary Entitlements Amendment 4: Contributory Provident Fund Committee

		Amendment 5: Staff Rules of Discipline/Grievance Settlement Amendment 6: Existing Qualification Upgrade Amendment 7: Performance Appraisals Amendment 8: Travel Policy
7.	Financial Management Policies	Insertion 1: Costing Policy Amendment 1: Petty Cash Management Amendment 2: Endowment Fund Policy Amendment 3: Depreciation Policy Amendment 4: Procurement Procedures
8.	Definition of IT Policy	Various aspects of Information Technology (IT) policy were amended to improve data security and software development quality.

2.7 Sub-contracts with TAF and AASR-GT

Sub-contracts between TDEA and its partners, The Asia Foundation (TAF) and Anjum Asim Shahid Rehman - Grant Thornton (AASR-GT), were finalized and submitted for USAID approval in the first week of July 2011, and were revised after meetings with partners on July 23 and July 25, 2011, respectively. The sub-contracts were re-submitted to USAID on August 1-2, 2011. The sub-contract between TDEA and AASR-GT was approved by USAID and signed on August 19, 2011.

However, it took a little longer to finalize and sign the TDEA-TAF sub-contract. The sub-contract needed to be converted in to Pakistani rupees, which involved resolution of exchange rate questions, among others. Furthermore, TAF needed time to seek input and approval from their San Francisco headquarters. A revised draft was approved by USAID on September 8, 2011. The TDEA-TAF sub-contract was signed in the second week of September, with the contract made effective from September 1, 2011.

2.8 Financial Liquidity

In the very beginning, it was realized that TDEA lacked adequate funds to finance the project, which was to be managed on reimbursement basis. The TDEA sought to address this challenge through multiple options including (a) use of limited endowment funds, (b) seeking a credit line from commercial banks, (c) arranging credit from venders, and (c) request to USAID for advance. TDEA's lack of liquid capital temporarily hampered the office setup process. However, the situation improved after a TDEA working capital advance request for RS 11,542,058 was approved by USAID in August 2011.

2. Administration, Procurement and Human Resource Management

2.1 Administration

The administration department of the Project undertook and completed a range of tasks including the following:

- Project office was setup and furnished.

- Meetings were held with International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), as suggested by USAID, to plan the transfer of assets from IFES to the Citizens' Voice Project office. The transfer of assets from IFES to TDEA was initiated on July 31, 2011, and completed in a phased manner in the following months.
- Work stations were established, and required equipment installed.
- Routine operations in relation to office maintenance, repairs, security, cleanliness, logistics, supplies and services.
- Periodic stock taking and tagging of project assets was completed.
- New electricity meters were installed after the previous ones caught fire and were burnt on March 2, 2012.
- Administrative support was provided to the communications department for arrangement of information sessions in major cities.
- Ongoing administrative support to the project staff for, among others, internal and external meetings, monitoring and evaluation work, and grant application evaluations.

In the reporting period, steps were also taken to strengthen the administration department, as well as to separate the administration from the procurement function. This change was considered necessary in view of increasing workload and compliance considerations.

2.2 Procurement

In addition to the routine procurement operations for the office needs, the procurement department undertook the following major tasks:

- Procured office building on rent, work stations and equipment, as required.
- Procured licensed software, as required under USAID regulations.
- Services of a security company were engaged.
- Applied and obtained the tax exemption certificate after pursuing the relevant authorities in the Economic Affairs Division.
- Advertised the 1st and 2nd Grant Cycles on November 4, 2011 and March 3, 2012 respectively.
- Contracts for office car on rent and Janitorial services were signed and revised from time as per need, or to improve procurement process.
- Procured Accounting Software for the finance department.
- Developed a strategy to streamline procurement issues and bring on board contractors for recurring expenses.
- Preparations were made to bring on board an advertising agency to cater all electronic and print media requirements.
- Support was provided to the communications department for Information Sessions in five major cities.
- The procurement process for two vehicles and security equipment for the project was initiated but could not be completed.

Simultaneous to above operations, the project team also prepared a revised procurement plan and submitted it to the USAID for approval on March 6, 2012. This was important for consolidation of approvals as well as securing tax exemptions from the EAD/GOP. In

preparing the required documentation and pursuing the tax exemption certificate, the Director (Finance, Grants and Compliance) guided the procurement staff regarding the process of obtaining tax and duty exemptions from GOP. This was the first time for TDEA to apply for exemption from taxes and duties from the EAD/GOP under USAID umbrella.

2.3 Human Resource Management

The designated Chief of Party had joined the project in the very beginning and, with the support of TDEA staff, he had started overseeing the mobilization phase including recruitment of required project staff. Other approved key personnel [i.e. Director, Capacity Building and Organizational Development (CBOD) and Director, Grants, Finance and Compliance (GFEC)] joined on August 8, 2011 and September 1, 2011 respectively. Their joining got delayed a bit due to delay in finalizing the sub-contract with TAF. Under the project design, these two positions were to be filled by TAF.

AS for the third key position of Director, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (ME&R), it was advertised in *The News* on July 31, 2011, with the approval of USAID. After careful scrutiny of the applications received, seven applicants were shortlisted and five of them were interviewed on August 17, 2011. After USAID approval, the selected candidate joined the project on November 1, 2011.

Other staff members were also recruited in various phases through a mixed approach of advertisements and head-hunting, as per the TDEA policy. In total, over 3778 applications were processed. Short-listed candidates were evaluated through tests, interviews and reference checks. Newspaper advertisements were published on July 31, 2011, October 2, 2011 and May 27, 2012. Below is the updated list of staff working on the project by the end of June 2012:

Sr. No	Employee Name	Designation	Joining Date	Contract Expiry
1	Mukhtar Ahmed Ali	Chief of Party	3-Jun-11	27-May-14
2	Iram Ayub Malik	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	1-Aug-11	27-May-14
3	M. Kaleem Khan	Office Boy	8-Aug-11	27-May-14
4	Nida Sultan	Procurement Officer	5-Sep-11	27-May-14
5	M.Haroon Asif	Manager Communications and External Relations	7-Sep-11	27-May-14
6	Waqas Yousaf	Network Administrator	16-Sep-11	27-May-14
7	Sardar Iftikhar Khan	Manager MIS	19-Sep-11	27-May-14
8	Uzma Farogh	SPO	19-Sep-11	27-May-14
9	Muhammad Adil Bilal	Human Resources Officer	26-Sep-11	27-May-14
10	Muhammad Ali	Administror Assistant	3-Oct-11	27-May-14
11	Mehnaz Bibi	Receptionist	3-Oct-11	27-May-14
12	Shehzad ul Hassan	Manager Finance	10-Oct-11	27-May-14
13	Abdul Saboor	Manager Program Development and Research	1-Nov-11	27-May-14

14	Ajmal Elahi	Manager Monitoring and Evaluation	25-Oct-11	27-May-14
15	Ali Shan Azhar	Director MER	1-Nov-11	27-May-14
16	Muhammad Ishaq	Graphic Designer	1-Sep-11	27-May-14
17	Abdul Sattar	Driver	3-Oct-11	27-May-14
18	Rashid Qureshi	Officer Boy –Cook	17-Oct-11	27-May-14
19	M. Irfan Khan	Finance officer	16-Nov-11	27-May-14
20	Syed Ali Hashim	Finance officer	15-Nov-11	27-May-14
21	Muzafer Shah	Application Developer	24-Nov-11	27-May-14
22	Fatima Shakeel	PO	1-Dec-11	27-May-14
23	Amjad Ali Shah	M& E Officer	1-Dec-11	27-May-14
24	Fazal Karim	M& E Officer	7-Dec-11	27-May-14
25	Fahad Masood Malik	Grants Officer	12-Dec-11	27-May-14
26	Anam Tariq	Grants Officer	2-Jan-12	27-May-14
27	Inayat Ali	PO-PDR	2-Jan-12	27-May-14
28	Nudrat Mufti	PO-PDR	4-Jan-12	27-May-14
29	Sardar Tahir Ali	SPO-PDR	5-Jan-12	27-May-14
30	Aziz Zamir Khan	Manager Grants	17-Jan-12	27-May-14
31	Aatif Abdullah	Program Officer Communication & Publications	26-Dec-11	27-May-14
32	Farhad Shah	Data Entry Operator	10-Feb-12	27-May-14
33	Nazir Ahmed Laghari	M & E Officer	27-Feb-12	27-May-14
34	Syeda Amina Ahmed	SPO-Communications	6-Mar-12	27-May-14
35	Zahra Gandapur	PO-Communications	6-Mar-12	27-May-14
36	Adnan Khan	Finance officer	26-Apr-12	27-May-14

Besides recruitments, the HR department facilitated the process of constituting two committees, which are:

- Internal Disciplinary Committee was constituted on Tuesday, March 27, 2012; and
- Sexual Harassment Committee was constituted on Thursday, March 29, 2012.

The HR department also organized an information session for the project staff on the TDEA's health insurance policy on Thursday, January 26, 2012. Purpose of the meeting was to ensure that staff members were adequately aware of their rights and entitlements under the agreed terms and conditions with the insurance company.

The following vacancies were lying vacant at the end of the year:

Department	Vacancies
Finance	0
Grants	1
Communications & External Relations	0
IT/ MIS	2
Human Resource	0

Admin/Procurement	1
Monitoring & Evaluation	1
Program Development & Research	3

In addition to the above, the HR department, with the help of TAF and AASR's capacity building teams, reviewed and improved its documentation and procedures in relation to the following:

- Employment Contract Form
- Next of Kin Form
- Personnel File Checklist
- Orientation plan for bringing new employees on-board
- Reference checks
- Timesheets
- Best practices
- Payroll management.

Staff Orientations and Trainings

TDEA arranged a series of activities to ensure that project staff was fully aware of TDEA policies and procedures. Among others, it organized a presentation on TDEA policies and procedures for Citizens' Voice Project staff including COP, Directors, Managers and administrative personnel on September 12, 2011. The purpose of this presentation was to develop staff understanding of TDEA policies for the smooth running of the project.

3. Monitoring, Evaluation and Research

3.1 Program Development and Research

3.1.1 Technical Review of Applications

During the year, the Program Development and Research (PD&R) Unit, with the support of M&E Unit, completed technical reviews of applications received under the first and second grants cycles. After the reconciliation process, the results of the technical review process were presented in the Grants Management Committee (GMC) meetings. The GMC recommended the following number of applications for various themes for clarifications and pre-award assessments:

- 5 for water rights sector
- 5 for energy sector reforms
- 12 for municipal services
- 01 for tax sector
- 06 for legislative governance
- 13 for education sector reforms.

3.1.2 Clarifications and Revision of Applications

Following the relevant GMC meetings for the two cycles, the PD&R Unit shared the comments of GMC about the qualifying applications with the respective organizations; and sought clarifications and revisions in their applications. The related process involved emails, telephone follow-ups, meetings and provision of technical guidance through a session with all short-listed applicants. The PD&R Unit primarily handled this work, while M&E Unit and Grants Unit also extended necessary support, as required. As a result, the short-listed applications were revised and improved for the two cycles managed during the first year.

After necessary revisions in the applications, the PD&R Unit made preparations for the PSC meetings held on January 17, 2012, January 31, 2012, May 10, 2012 and June 6, 2012. Later, the applications were further revised in the light of PSC comments. Later, for the first cycle, the Chief of Party submitted 18 PSC approved applications, along with required documentation, to the USAID in three separate batches on February 2, 2012, February 8, 2012 and February 17, 2012. Similarly, for the second grant cycle, 17 applications were recommended to the USAID on June 7, 2012. Summary information about these applications is presented as below:

First and Second Grant Cycles: PSC Recommended Applications to the USAID

	Nation-wide	Punjab	Sindh	Gilgit-Baltistan	Balochistan	KPK	AJ&K	Total
Energy Sector Reforms	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
Water Rights	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
Municipal Services	0	4	3	0	0	3	0	10
Tax Sector	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Legislative Governance	0	0	0	1	1	2	0	4
Education Sector Reforms	1	5	1	0	0	4	1	12
Total	**4**	**13**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**10**	**1**	**35**

After 13 applications related to first grants cycle were approved by USAID on March 20, 2012, the PD&R unit sent letters to those applicants whose applications had been conditionally approved, requesting necessary clarifications and revisions. After required revisions, the applications were sent to the Grants Unit for onward processing and award of grants. Summary information of USAID approved applications during the year is presented as below:

First Grants Cycle: USAID Approved Applications

	Nation-	Punjab	Sindh	KPK	Total

	wide				
Energy Sector Reforms	3	0	0	1	4
Water Rights	0	3	1	0	4
Municipal Services	0	0	3	2	5
Total	**3**	**3**	**4**	**3**	**13**

3.1.3 Development of Program Descriptions

In this year, the PD&R Unit worked on a range of themes shared by the USAID or identified by the project management on its own initiatives, which could be submitted to the USAID for approval and then solicitation of grant applications. These themes included, among others, police reforms, voters' turnout, legislative governance, corruption, consumer rights, health, education, anti-corruption, taxation, 18th amendment, media, property rights and legal framework of NPOs. Out of these, program descriptions on the following were approved by the USAID:

For the First Cycle:
- Municipal services
- Energy sector reforms
- Water rights

For the Second Cycle:
- Advocacy for Strengthening Legal Framework for Non-profit Organizations
- Citizens' Voice and Public Accountability in the Tax Collection Sector
- Citizens' Voice for Effective Legislative Governance
- Education Sector Reforms, and
- Citizens' Vice for Transparent and Accountable Mechanism.

A summary of the 1st grant solicitation is presented in the Table below:

Theme	Number of Grants	Time Period	Geographical Priorities	Average Grants Size (PKR)
Municipal Services	10	Up to 2 years	Malakand Division; Peshawar district; South Punjab; Upper Sindh	8,500,000
Water Rights	4	Up to 12 Months	Sindh, Punjab, and KPK	12,750,000

Energy Sector Reforms	10	Up to 30 Months	Nation-wide	8,500,000

A summary of the 2nd grant solicitation is presented in the Table below:

Theme	Number of Grants	Time Period	Geographical Priorities	Average Grants Size (PKR)
Citizen Voice for Effective Legislative Governance	15	Up to 2 years	National/ Provincial: 13 Gilgit Balistan: 1 AJK: 1	17,000,000
Citizens Voice and Public Accountability in Tax Collection Sector	10	Up to 18 Months	Federal: 5 Provincial: 5	12,750,000
Education Sector Reforms	10	Up to 12 Months	Nation-wide	8,500,000
Advocacy for Strengthening Legal Framework for NPOs	2	Up to 12 Months	Federal & Punjab	8,500,000

3.1.4. Other Work

Before the evaluation process for the first grant cycle, the PD&R unit carried out relevant paper work after detailed consultations. The preparatory steps included the following:

- Clarity of process in the light of grants manual, contract, USAID regulations and GMC guidance;
- Development of detailed evaluation criteria, along with clarifying notes, in the light of USAID instructions;
- Detailed work plans;
- Constitution of Technical Review Committees (TRCs);
- Training of TRCs.

Later, while preparing for the 2nd grants cycle, the PD&R Unit undertook lesson-learning exercises on the basis of the experience of 1st grants cycle, and then contributed to necessary revisions in various documents such as the RFA and the Assessment Matrix.

3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

During the year, the M&E unit accomplished a range of tasks including development of monitoring plan, drafting of PMP, finalization of pre-award assessment tools, pre-award assessments, and contribution to technical reviews. A summary of major tasks accomplished during the quarter is presented below:

3.2.1. Technical Review of Applications

The ME&R Unit provided support to the PD&R Unit in the technical review of applications of the first and second grants cycle. Its staff members participated in the reviews and then the related reconciliation, lesson learning and documentation processes.

3.2.2. Performance Management Plan (PMP)

The PMP was drafted during the year after consultations with all other relevant units and senior management. Later, it was revised in the light of comments received from the members of the Project Steering Committee. However, it could not be approved by the USAID during the year due to certain constraints on the USAID end.

3.2.3. Development of Pre-award Assessment Tools

The unit drafted pre-award assessment tools with focus on governance and program implementation capacity of potential grantees. After review, these were finalized and later used for programmatic pre-award assessments.

3.2.4. Programmatic Pre award Assessments

The M&E Unit initiated and completed the programmatic pre-award assessments of potential grantees under the 1st and 2nd grants cycles. Objective of these assessments was to systematically and objectively assess the institutional, governance and programme implementation capacity of the potential grantees in the light of the objectives specified in Grants Manual of the Project as well as to meet the requirements of Mission Order 200.4. On the basis of this exercise, potential grantees were ranked as low, medium or high risk. Details of the risk categorization of short-listed applicants under the first and second grants cycles are given as below:

First Grants Cycle: Programmatic Risk Assessments

| Applicant Name		Risk Category
Energy Sector Reforms		
CVP-01-11-63-63	The Network for Consumer Protection	Low Risk
CVP-01-12-134-134	Consumer Rights Commission of Pakistan (CRCP)	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-133-133	Peoples Empowerment and Consulting Enterprise (PEACE)	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-72-72	Semiotics	Medium Risk
Improving Water Rights		

Applicant Name		Risk Category
CVP-01-11-38-38	Awaz CDS	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-88-88	Participatory Efforts for Healthy Environment	Low Risk
CVP-01-12-135-135	GINI	Medium Risk
CVP-01-11-68-68	DAMMAN Development Organization	Medium Risk
Citizens' Oversight of Municipal Services		
cvp-01-12-136-136	Goth Seengar Foundation	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-9-9	Participatory Educational Awareness and Community Empowerment (PEACE-SINDH)	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-48-48	Association for Behavior & Knowledge Transformation (ABKT)	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-47-47	Akhter Hameed Khan Resource Centre (AHKRC)	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-78-78	Dir Area Development Organization (DADO)	Low Risk
CVP-01-11-58-58	Association of Global Humanists & Ethics (AGHE)	Medium Risk
CVP-01-11-120-120	Inventure Private Limited	Medium Risk
CVP-01-11-79-79	Semiotics Consultants (pvt) Limited	Medium Risk
CVP-01-11-31-31	DevCon-An Association for Rural Development	Medium Risk
CVP-01-11-124-124	Rawadari Development Organization	Medium Risk

Second Grants Cycle: Programmatic Risk Assessments

Application #	Applicant Name	Risk Category
Citizens' Voice for Effective Legislative Governance		
CVP-02-12-25-161	Hamdam Development Organization	Low Risk
CVP-02-12-40-176	Center for Peace and Development Initiative (CPDI)	Low Risk
CVP-02-12-14-150	Pak women	Low Risk
CVP-02-12-96-232	Your Engineering Solution Pvt. Limited (YES)	Low Risk
CVP-02-12-61-197	Association of Global Humanist and Ethics	Medium Risk
CVP-02-12-109-245	Water Environment and Sanitation Society	Medium Risk
Tax Sector		
CVP-02-12-120-256	Governance Institute and Network International (GINI)	Medium Risk

Application #	Applicant Name	Risk Category
Education Sector Reforms		
cvp-02-12-128-264	Pak education society	Medium Risk
cvp-02-12-126-262	Leadership for Environment and Development Pakistan	Low Risk
cvp-02-12-117-253	READ Foundation	Low Risk
cvp-02-12-49-185	Sudhaar Society	Low Risk
cvp-02-12-70-206	Children First	Low Risk
cvp-02-12-35-171	Human Development Foundation	Low Risk
cvp-02-12-102-238	Development & Empowerment Women Association	Medium Risk
cvp-02-12-10-146	Organization for Human Development	Medium Risk
cvp-02-12-94-230	Semiotic	Medium Risk
cvp-02-12-43-179	DevCon	Medium Risk
cvp-02-12-108-244	Center for Peace and Development Initiative (CPDI)	Low Risk
cvp-02-12-122-258	Institute of Social and Policy Sciences	Medium Risk
cvp-02-12-52-188	Society for Human Empowerment and Rural Development	Medium Risk

The graphs given below show the applicant wise percentage of obtained marks in each thematic area. The applicants above the green line fall in low risk category, whereas the applicants between red and green line fall in medium risk category.

FIRST GRANT CYCLE: APPLICANT WISE % OF MARKS
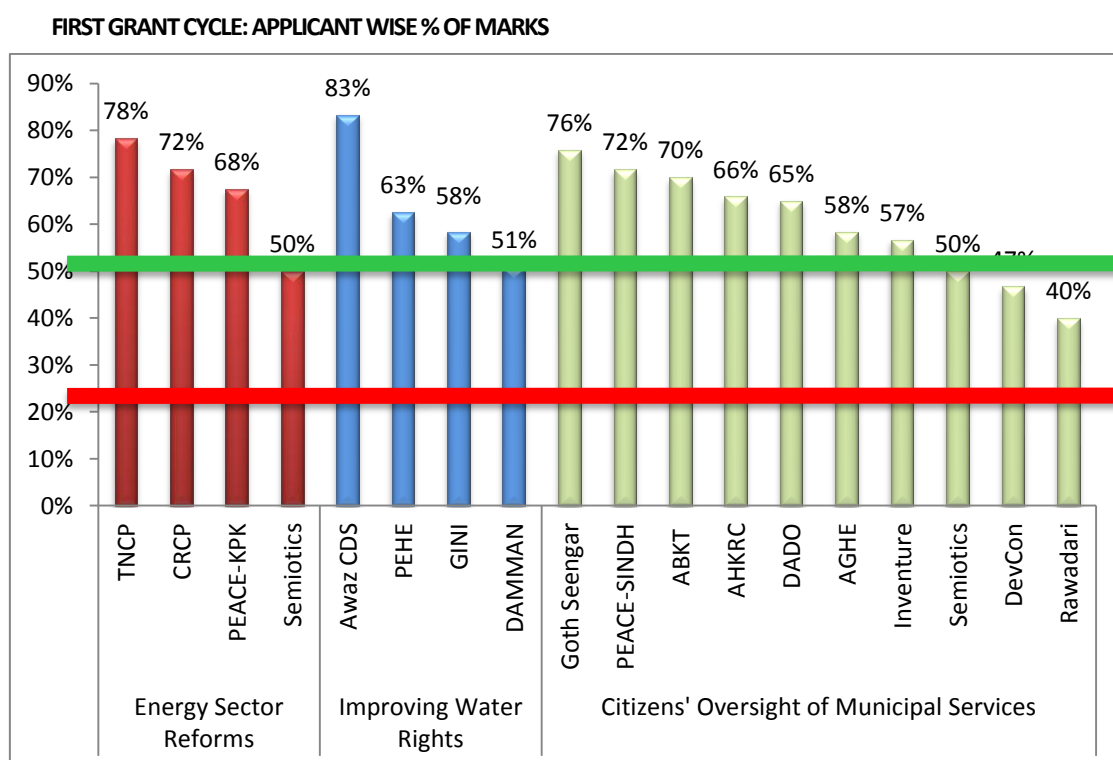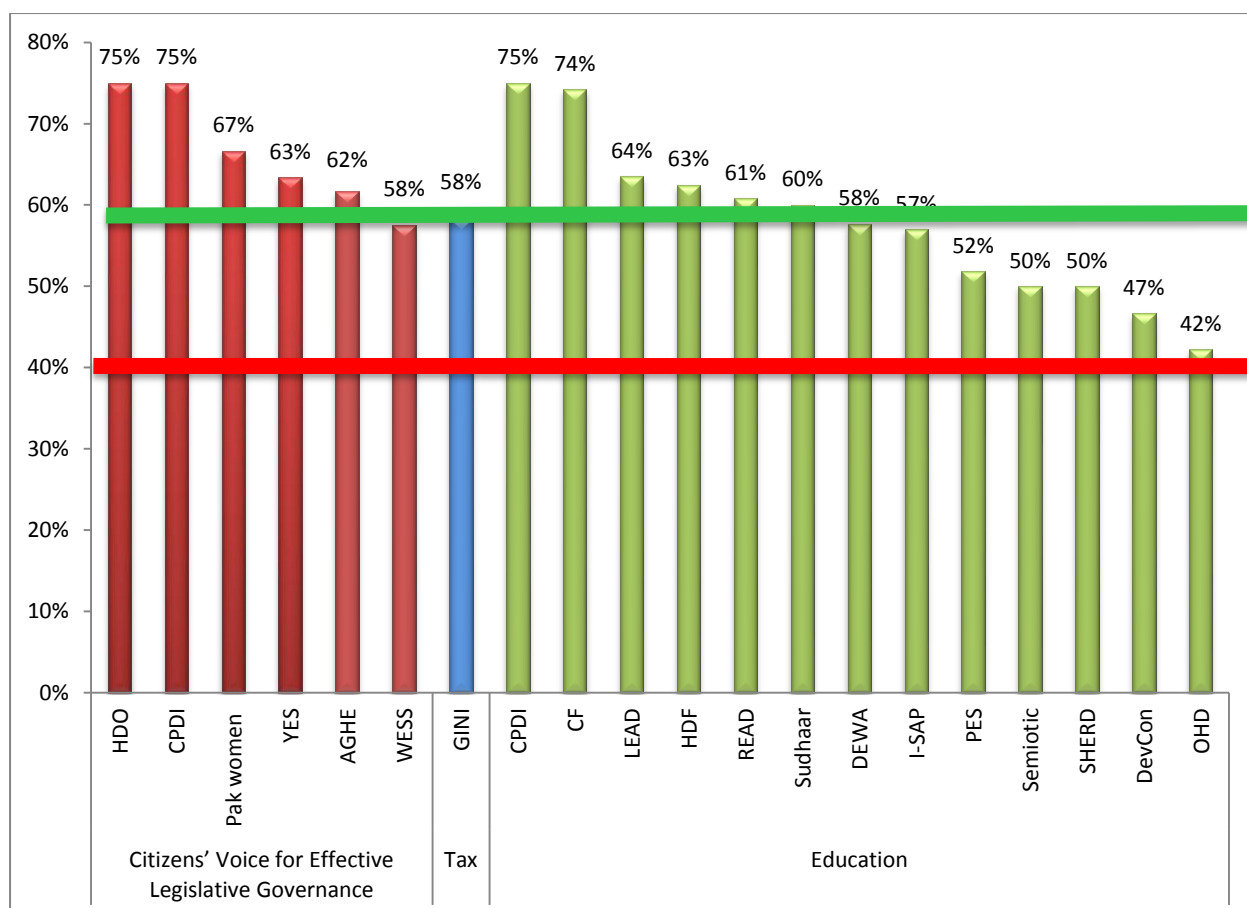
3.2.5. Pre-Award Assessments (Finance, HR and Procurement)

For the 1st grant cycle, AASR undertook the pre-award assessments of prospective grantees under task orders 3 and 4 issued on 4th and 17th January 2012 respectively. Whereas, for the 2nd grant cycle, AASR-GT carried out the pre-award assessments in late April and May 2012.

The staff members allocated for the engagements were briefed on the application of the assessment toolkit in the orientation sessions held at the AASR office. Mobilization plans were developed based upon which the pre-award assessments were executed. The name of the organizations along with the type of assessments conducted is summarized below:

Cycle 1: Potential Grantees' Risk Rating

Sr #	Grantee Name	Thematic Area	Assessment Type	Overall
1	Dir Area Development Organization (DADO)	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	Low
2	Goth Seengar Foundation	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	Low
3	DevCon Association for Rural Development	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	Moderate
4	Participatory Educational Awareness and Community Empowerment (PEACE)	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Detailed Assessment	Low

	Sindh			
5	Akhtar Hameed Khan Resource Centre (AHKRC)	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Detailed Assessment	High
6	Association for Behaviour and Knowledge Transformation (ABKT)	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	Moderate
7	AcroCare Welfare Association	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	High
8	Association for Global Humanists and Ethics (AGHE)	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	High
9	Inventure Private Limited	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	Low
10	Rawadari Development Organization	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	High
11	Sarhad Rural Support Program (SRSP)	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	Rapid Assessment	Low
12	Awaz Foundation Pakistan, Centre for Development Services	Improving Water Rights	Detailed Assessment	Low
13	DAMAAN Development Organization	Improving Water Rights	Detailed Assessment	Moderate
14	Governance Institutes Network International (GINI)	Improving Water Rights	Detailed Assessment	Moderate
15	Participatory Efforts for Healthy Environment	Improving Water Rights	Detailed Assessment	Low
16	Consumer Rights Commission of Pakistan	Energy Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
17	Semiotics Consultants (Pvt.) Limited	Energy Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
18	People Empowerment and Consulting Enterprise (PEACE)	Energy Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
19	The Network for Consumer Protection	Energy Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
20	National Rural Support Programme (NRSP)	Energy Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low

Cycle 2: Potential Grantees' Risk Assessment

Sr #	Grantee Name	Thematic Area	Assessment Type	Overall Risk
1	Pak Women	Citizens' Voice for Effective Legislative Governance	Detailed Assessment	High
2	Hamdam Development Organization (HDO)	Citizens' Voice for Effective Legislative Governance	Detailed Assessment	Low
3	Association of Global Humanists & Ethics (AGHE)	Citizens' Voice for Effective Legislative Governance	Rapid Assessment	High
4	Water, Environment and Sanitation Society (WESS)	Citizens' Voice for Effective Legislative Governance	Detailed Assessment	Low
5	Governance Institutes Network International (GINI)	Citizens' Voice and Public Accountability in Tax Collection Sector	Detailed Assessment	Moderate
6	Society for Human Empowerment and Rural Development	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Moderate
7	Pak education society	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Moderate
8	Children First	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
9	Sudhaar Society	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
10	DevCon - An Association for Rural Development	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Moderate
11	Leadership for Environment and Development Pakistan	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
12	READ Foundation	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
13	Development & Empowerment Women Association	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Moderate
14	Human Development Foundation	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Low
15	Organization for Human Development	Education Sector Reforms	Rapid Assessment	Moderate
16	Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI)	Education Sector Reforms	Detailed Assessment	Moderate

For each of the above-mentioned organizations, reports along with annexures and supporting files were submitted to Citizens' Voice Project's management, which used these reports in the evaluation process, especially in terms of determining risk assessments, informing monitoring plans, preparing capacity action plans and identifying pre-award and post-award conditions.

In order to review the successes and challenges after the first cycle assessments, a lessons learning session was held at the AASR office in February 2012. Feedback was sought from all the relevant teams. The meeting was attended by relevant staff of the Project, senior management of AASR and engagement supervisors. The discussions helped in improving the planning for the next cycles.

The reports of pre-award assessments are made available on the Grants Management Information System (GMIS).

3.2.6 Pre & Post Award Conditions

The risk assessment exercise helped to determine the special conditions/requirements that may be needed to strengthen the systems of the grantees and to help ensure compliance. Therefore, on the basis of the programmatic risk assessment, the M&E Unit finalized pre and post award conditions for each potential grantee. The Grants Unit used the AASR-GT reports to identify conditions and capacity action plans in relation to finance, HR and procurement.

3.2.7 M&E Manual

During the year, the M&E unit completed the first draft of M&E manual. The basic objective of this manual is to provide practical guidelines on the Citizens' Voice Project monitoring and evaluation processes and procedures. It will serve as a guideline for M&E staff in conducting pre award assessments of potential sub-awardees and post award M&E of the sub-awardees. It explains the responsibilities of M&E team in carrying out different tasks and highlights how it will need to interact with other units of the project including the MIS, PD&R and Communication. The main components of the manual include: core functions of M&E, M&E Framework, pre and post award M&E, data collection, analysis and reporting mechanisms.

3.2.8 Grants Management Committee (GMC) Meetings

The M&E Unit facilitated the meetings and decision making by the GMC. The minutes of these meetings were finalized and uploaded in the online system. The table below summarizes the information about various meetings held during the first year:

GMC Meetings		
Meeting	Date	Agenda
1st GMC Meeting	December 16, 2011	• Review of the list of online application submitted under First Grants Cycle • Opening of the sealed envelopes (applications submitted by post) • Overview of timelines for initial application review by technical committee (TRC)
2nd GMC Meeting	December 23, 2011	• Progress overview till date (as per technical grant evaluation cycle) • Decision about immediate correspondence with some of

		the applicants
3rd GMC Meeting	January 3, 2012	• Progress overview of the technical review of applications under thematic areas of 'Energy Sector Reforms' and 'Improving Water Rights' • Evaluation of applications by GMC ('Energy Sector Reforms' and 'Improving Water Rights')
4th GMC Meeting	January 11, 2012	• TRC suggestions/sharing results of re-evaluation of 'Energy Sector Reforms' obtaining below than 60 marks • Progress overview of technical review of applications of 'Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services'
5th PSC Meeting	January 16, 2012	• Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services
6th GMC Meeting	February 6, 2012	• Evaluation of applications by GMC 'Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services'
7th GMC Meeting	February 21, 2012	• Lessons Learnt from 1st Grant Cycle
8th GMC Meeting	March 30, 2012	• Pre- and Post-award conditions to be applied on successful applicants of the 1st Grants Cycle • Summary of online applications submitted under Second Grants Cycle • Approval and Notification of Technical Evaluation Committees for 2nd Grants Cycle • Approval of changes in Technical Evaluation Cycle/Timelines for 2nd Grants Cycle and revised assessment Matrix
9th GMC Meeting	April 19, 2012	• Evaluation of applications under the thematic area of 'Citizen Oversight of Legislative Governance' • Evaluation of applications under the thematic area of 'Citizens' Voice and Public Accountability In Tax Collection Sector' • Evaluation of Applications under the thematic area of 'Advocacy for Strengthening Legal Framework for NPOs'
10th GMC Meeting	May 3, 2012	• Sharing results of pre-award assessment • Discussing Conflict of Interests • Evaluation of applications under the thematic area of 'Education Sector Reforms' • Prioritization of applications • Pre-award assessment & notification • Clarification from applicants • Budgets of shortlisted applicants • Proposed system to manage multiple awards
11th GMC Meeting	May 25, 2012	• Discussion on CPDI and I-SAPS applications based on PSC's feedback • Discussion on GMIS related points • Communication Protocols to/from Grantees • GT pre-award assessment reports

		• Revision of risk assessment ranking • Coefficient of variation in marking by TRC • Update on progress made by grantees of First Grants Cycle
12th GMC Meeting	June 12, 2012	• Review of I-SAPS revised application in light of PSC's comments • Review of AHKC revised application and budget realignment request
13th GMC Meeting	July 10, 2012	• Review of the list of online applications under Cycle 3 • Review of award conditions of Cycle 2 applications • Overview of timelines for initial technical application review by technical committee (TRC) • Review of Grant Making Process • Review of Eligibility Criteria • Suggestions for amendments to the sub-award manual
14th GMC Meeting	July 27, 2012	• Evaluation of applications by GMC (Advocacy for Effective Implementation of the Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR) Reforms)
15th GMC Meeting	July 31, 2012	• Evaluation of applications by GMC ('Energy Sector Reforms' and 'Citizens' Engagement and Accountability for an Effective Local Government System')
16th GMC Meeting	August 1, 2012	• Evaluation of applications by GMC ('Citizens' Advocacy for implementation of 18th Amendment ' and "Citizens' Engagement and Accountability for an Effective Local Government System')
17th GMC Meeting	August 2 and August 3, 2012	• Evaluation of applications by GMC ('Citizens' Advocacy for implementation of 18th Amendment') • Evaluation of applications by GMC ('Citizens' Voice for Strengthening Accountability and Transparency Mechanisms')

3.2.9 Reporting Formats

As per the requirements of Performance Management Plan, the reporting formats for data collection from the grantees were designed during the year, and shared with the grantees. These were also used during the orientation sessions for the grantees.

3.2.10 Post Award M&E Plan

A post-award monitoring plan for the 1st and 2nd cycle grantees was prepared. While the plan is yet to be finalized, it is already being used for initial monitoring visits, as well as to inform the development of next modules of GMIS.

4. Finance, Grants and Compliance

4.1 Finance

4.1.1 Analysis of Expenditure for the Reporting Period

Expenditure of PKR 122,653,899 was incurred during the reporting period i.e. May 27, 2011 to June 30, 2012. This amount is about 3.2% of the total contract budget. The spending has been on the lower side due to progressive build-up of project team, delayed approval of tax exemptions, fewer solicitations than originally planned, insignificant grant activity and the delay in approval for grants. Furniture and equipment of a closed out project was provided by USAID, which substituted the planned expenditure. However, 13 out of 18 recommended grantees for first grant cycle were approved by USAID towards the end of March 2012, while approval of another 22 was pending with the USAID at the end of June 2012. With these approvals and announcement of more grant cycles at a faster pace, the utilization of funds is likely to substantially increase in the 2nd year.

The liquidity problem faced by the project was monitored carefully, and was raised with the USAID for additional support. A request for budget revision was also submitted to the USAID to respond to the changing needs of the project.

Procurement process for implementation of an integrated computerized accounting system was completed along with installations.

4.1.2 Risk Profile of TDEA

USAID initiated a validation exercise following up on the post disbursement conditions imposed on TDEA in the contract with USAID. These were in the backdrop of TDEA's high risk rating as a result of the pre-award assessment of TDEA conducted by a third party. All of the conditions were successfully met, except one related to tax exemption certificate which was also to be met by the end of the calendar year 2012. This validation exercise was conducted under the lead of USAID/Assessment and Strengthening Program being managed by RSPN.

Initially, TDEA had 33 high, 10 medium and zero low risk areas in pre-award assessment which means that out of 43 areas highlighted, 77% fell into high risk, resulting in an overall high risk profile. The validation exercise revised and reclassified 3 as high, 5 as medium and 35 as low risk areas from the original 43 points, implying that 81% have been reduced to low level with overall risk rating being improved to Medium as per the draft report of the validation exercise. Certain additional recommendations were also provided by the validating firms, which were discussed with RSPN/ASP and USAID in the exit meeting. This revision in risk profile represents significant achievement and will support in conversion of payment mechanism to advance-based from reimbursement-based for management and operational expenses. This will also help to cater to the long outstanding liquidity problems of TDEA.

4.2 Grants

4.2.1 Grants Management Manual

The Grants Management Manual was developed by the Grants Unit and was subsequently approved by USAID and the Board of Trustees of the TDEA. This manual documents the process of grant making and was an important pre-condition for disbursement of advances against grants.

4.2.2 Financial Proposal Negotiations

During the year, the Grants Unit reviewed the financial proposals of 35 PSC approved applicants, and then shared the feedback with the applicants. This feedback facilitated the negotiation process leading to revision of financial proposals. Subsequently, in light of USAID's recommendations, financial proposals of 13 USAID approved applicants were further revised and finalized. Negotiation process with the remaining recommended applicants was inconclusive in view of pending USAID approvals.

4.2.3 Pre & Post Award Conditions

Pre and post award conditions were identified for 13 applicant organizations after review of the pre-award assessment reports shared by AASR and the Citizens' Voice Project's M&E team. Input from both the reports was consolidated, reviewed and classified as pre-award conditions, recommendations and capacity action plan. Closing meetings for pre-award assessments were carried out with each applicant organization to resolve the issues and to finalize pre award conditions, and capacity action plans.

4.2.4 Inputs in Grants Management Information System

Input and feedback was provided to the MIS team for the development of pre and post award modules of the GMIS relating to the grant cycles. Format for the GMIS was drafted with the help of TAF grants team to cater for the information needs of the project grants management team.

4.2.5 Due Diligence

The Grants Unit conducted anti-terrorist vetting for the 18 PSC approved applications under the first grants cycle. In addition, the Unit managed various types of required certifications for USAID approved applications. These included, among others, the following:

- Terrorist financing
- Drug free workplace
- Narcotics offence and drug trafficking
- Lobbying

As a part of the overall due diligence process, certifications and representations, including obtaining DUNS number, were obtained from approved grantees. These documents were reviewed and verified by the project Grants Unit. FFATA declaration forms were also obtained to meet compliance requirements of USAID.

4.2.6 Grant making and Negotiation Process

Process of finalizing different pre-award forms and disclosure checklists related to grant applicants was initiated and subsequently completed. A budget review checklist was developed and it served as a tool for project grants management team in reviewing of applicant budgets. Pre and post award conditions were discussed with the finalized 13 applicants. Final negotiations were carried out in which Program team discussed the programmatic risks identified during the pre-award assessments, and grants team concluded the budget negotiations. Project's MIS, PD&R and M&E also gave their input in these final negotiations.

4.2.7 Grant Agreements

The Grants Unit provided assistance to the TAF's team in the process of drafting 13 grant agreements for Simplified Sub-awards and Fixed Obligation Sub-awards in relation to the first grants cycle. Preparations were also made for the awards to be made under the second grants cycle after the USAID approvals. The first tranche of advance funds was also disbursed to grantees under cycle – 1.

4.2.8 Post Award Orientation

A post award orientation was conducted for the 13 grantees under Cycle 1 in which terms and conditions of the agreement, financial and programmatic report requirements were explained to them.

4.3. Compliance

The AASR team developed the checklists, tools and procedures in order to perform the compliance functions, as per the terms of its sub-contract. Following the finalization of these tools and procedures, AASR-GT compliance team carried out the compliance testing of all the POs/ Contracts provided by the procurement section and all the vouchers provided by the Accounts & Finance department relating to various months of the reporting year. The compliance work was performed in relation to the requirements of TDEA's Compendium of Policies, USAID regulations and contractual obligations. Accordingly, internal monthly compliance reports were prepared and shared with the management of the Citizens' Voice Project.

Semi Annual Compliance Report, covering to June – December 2011 period, was compiled and submitted to the management of the Citizens' Voice Project on 2nd March 2012. This report covered the compliance of the TDEA, TAF and AASR in the following areas:

- Special Conditions Compliance - Post Disbursement;
- Special Contractual Requirements Compliance;
- Contractual Reports and Deliverables Compliance;
- Compliance of Outflows;
- Compliance of Inflows; and
- Branding and Marking.

Furthermore, the report included budget line wise findings based upon compliance testing over the mentioned period, and a trend analysis of the frequency of non-compliances. Compliance unit also performed the followings activities in addition to the performance highlighted above:

- The compliance testing checklists were modified based upon TDEA's compendium, current practices and referencing with USAID regulations.
- Collaboration with capacity building team in pointing out compliance issues for capacity building.
- Joint reviews with Citizens' Voice Project's management pertaining to the observations identified in the internal monthly compliance reports.

Preparations were made for compliance related monitoring of grantees, which would pick up pace in the 2nd year.

4.4. Other Initiatives and Assistance

In addition to the above, the Finance, Grants and Compliance Unit performed the following functions:

- Various times of forms, formats and templates were developed including grant application form, RFA, FAQs, etc.

- The Unit provided input in the process of developing, updating and maintaining the GMIS, including about checks and balances, security features, data confidentiality and authorization levels.

- Grant agreements for Simplified Sub-Awards and Fixed Obligation Sub-Award were prepared and sent to TAF for review and approval from their headquarters. Letter of Grants (LOG) templates along with General Term and Conditions, Special Terms and Conditions for both Fixed Obligation and Simplified Sub-Awards were also revised and updated to ensure that all mandatory standard provisions necessary for USAID sub-awards were incorporated in accordance with the requirements of subcontract between TAF and TDEA. A draft of a "transmittal letter" was also developed, which is printed on TDEA's letterhead and signed by the CEO TDEA, COP of the Project and Country Representative of TAF in order to communicate and acknowledge TDEA's role in the grant management process.

- The Unit, lead by Director, extended support for the groundwork related to drafting/revision of solicitation and subsequent Request for Applications (RFA) documents for the first, second and third grant cycles. Certain clarifications were introduced in the approved Sub-Awards Manual based on the experience of first and second grant cycles. The Unit also assisted the ME&R colleagues in revising the documents including application guidelines, grant application template and FAQs.

- The Unit developed templates for "close out checklist" and a "close out instruction letter" for use by the Project at the time of closing of sub-awards. These are important documents, which consolidate the approval and compliance requirements of grant agreements before a grant is closed.

- The Unit provided inputs to the GT-AASR team on a number of documents submitted by them relating to TNA, compliance, capacity building, assessments and monitoring.

- The Director reviewed and commented on the RFQ and other procurement templates drafted by GT-AASR for use by Project/ TDEA.

- The Director attended a range of meetings including with USAID officials, management of sub-contractors (i.e. TAF and AASR), management of TDEA, internal auditor, and other teams of the Project. Purpose of these meetings was to discuss various Project related matters or to offer advice for strengthening systems and procedures of TDEA.

- Under the supervision of the Director, the Unit contributed to preparation of a request for realignment of budget, which was later submitted to the USAID for approval.

- The Director of the Unit supervised preparation of request to USAID for enhancement in limit of working capital advance provided to the project and its extension beyond one year.

5. Management Information System (MIS)

The Management Information System (MIS) Unit is mandated to provide technological support, services and solutions for various needs and requirements of the Project. The aim of the Unit is IT enablement of the Project and achieving business targets by leveraging IT. In this context, the MIS Unit performed the following functions:

5.1. Web Site
- Development of website, redesigning and improvement.
- Regular content management of the Project website www.cvpa-tdea.org.
- Dissemination of solicitations and cycles, launch ceremonies and other regular updates.
- Data driven contact, feedback and complaints modules.
- Capturing website trends and statistics for traffic analysis.

5.2. Network
- Regular helpdesk support to network users.
- Regular backups, multimedia and print services.
- Separate bandwidth stream for grants server from cycle 1 onwards - segmenting the network infrastructure.

- Server maintenance and monitoring.

5.3. OTI Database

The OTI database was to be provided by NRSP and will be used as an additional reporting tool to USAID. In relation to this, the MIS Unit performed the following functions:

- Regular meetings with NRSP developers for requirement engineering and finalization of system design.
- Registration module was handed over to Citizens' Voice Project and first cycle recommended applications (13) logged in the database.
- Required engineering for the assessment module and reporting formats are under development.

5.4. PakInfo

PakInfo is a new initiative by USAID to capture progress of all USAID projects in Pakistan on a single platform with graphical geographical representation. Major Citizens' Voice Project milestones were logged in PakInfo.

5.5. GMIS

The Grants Management Information System (GMIS) was developed, which now maintains data of first, second and third grant cycles. Major features include:

- All grant applications can be received and processed online for various cycles.
- Security revamp (i.e. thematic segregation, history logging, password strengthening, reject direct file access, SSL encryption, MD5 encryption on password fields and number of others layered improvement.
- Graphical system statistics (most are publically available, while detailed stats are available to privileged system users).
- Multilingual support (Urdu and English).
- Real time summary view of the assessment status of applications.
- Launched Reports, Tasks, Meetings, Requisition, Correspondence and Phone log modules and carrying out regular QA checks.
- Redesign & launch of Initial Review and Technical Review modules based on new requirements in the 2nd cycle.
- Implemented variance feature in Technical Review Assessment.
- Post award required engineering and development of MN&E, GRANTS, TAF, & CB modules (in Progress).
- GMIS technical & functional manuals (In-progress).
- IT policy redefined for possible inclusion in TDEA compendium (In-progress).
- Re-factoring application submission process includes hashed values, which are emailed to the client to ensure no change to the application was made.

- Re-factoring GMIS information security & information safe custody with a focus on Business continuity (In-progress).

6. Capacity Building

Under the agreed terms and conditions, TAF and AASR are responsible for capacity building of TDEA as well as sub-grantees in a range of areas including grants making, human resource management, finance, procurements, program implementation and organizational development. During the first year, the capacity building work remained focused on TDEA, while preparations were also made for the trainings of sub-grantees in terms of needs assessment, background research, module development and trainings of trainers.

6.1. Capacity Building of Project Staff and TDEA

Both TAF and AASR implemented a range of activities aimed at building the capacity of project staff as well as TDEA in selected areas. These are briefly presented as below:

6.1.1 Strategic Planning of TDEA

Considering that TDEA had significantly evolved in terms of the scope of its work since its establishment, it was felt necessary to undertake its strategic planning, based on an analysis of its past performance, strengths, weaknesses and vision of its leadership for the future. In view of its felt importance, it was made a part of TDEA-TAF sub-contract. Later, TAF recruited a consultant through a competitive process to help TDEA in its strategic planning. The terms of references of his assignment included, among others, the review of past performance, interviews of stakeholders, analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and development of a report, which could inform the planning for the future. The consultant carried out his research and submitted a draft report in March 2012, which was reviewed and finalized. However, the strategic planning process to complete, there is a need to organize a strategic planning workshop, which will be held after the TDEA secretariat conveys the availability of its staff and board members.

6.1.2 On-Job Trainings of the Project and TDEA Staff

The project is designed in a manner that it offers significant on-job capacity building opportunities for the project and TDEA staff over the life of the project. The on-job training is delivered through the following methods:

- Director, Finance, Grants and Compliance, is one of the TAF's recruited staff of the Project. He sits in the project office and supervises the finance and grants units of the project, which are staffed by the TDEA's recruited staff. Hence, the TDEA staff has the opportunity to learn from the guidance of the Director, who has extensive knowledge of USAID regulations and experience of working on USAID projects.

- The capacity building staff of AASR sits in the project office and, besides organizing formal training events, is readily accessible to project/ TDEA staff for any guidance in the course of performing their work. The project staff regularly interacted with the

AASR staff and benefitted from their support and guidance, both formally and informally. The guidance that was available through the AASR team pertained to human resource management, finance and procurements.

- In relation to the first grants cycle, the project management requested AASR to embed the designated project staff in their pre-award assessment teams in order to provide them relevant exposure and experience. Accordingly, three staff members, one each from TDEA Secretariat, project's finance department and grants department were assigned to accompany GT-AASR assessment teams for observing the process of pre-award assessments so that they get hands on experience of the pre-award assessment process. The staff reported back their performance and shared their learning experience of this on the job training.

6.1.3. Training Workshops

Besides the on-job training, TAF and AASR also organized formal training workshops for the project/ TDEA staff. For instance, TAF organized training workshops on the grants making process for the project and TDEA staff on January 12, 2012, May 18, 2012 and May 21, 2012. These were held in the meeting room at the Project Office, and were conducted by M. Jameel Hussain, who is working on the Project as Director Finance, Grants & Compliance. Other resource persons included Ms. Ayesha Adil Ali and Ms. Amena Raja, Senior Program Officers at the Gender Equity Program (GEP). More training workshops are planned on topics like financial reports, operational activities, human resource management, procurement process, devising contracts, sub-contracts and financial management.

On the other hand, AASR made preparations for the capacity building of project/ TDEA staff in terms of TNA, development of modules and preparation of a work plan. TNA of TDEA and project staff was carried out in order to determine the level of their existing understanding and capacity. The TNA process contributed to informing the module development process. AASR also conducted the following training workshops for the project and TDEA staff:

Date of the Training	Title of the Training	Number of Participants
23-May-12	INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	18
7-Jun-12	HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING	14
2-Jul-12	RECRUITMENT & SELECTION	19
23-May-12	INTRODUCTION TO PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT	22
14-Jun-12	PLAN PROCUREMENT	23
30-Jul-12	BID ANALYSIS & BID EVALUATION	5
30-May-12	INTRODUCTION TO FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	22
21-Jun-12	BUDGETING & PLANNING	19

TAF also started organizing training workshops for the relevant staff of grantee organizations. First training was held on 5-7 June 2012 in Islamabad, while several other trainings were planned for the following months.

6.1.4. Technical Advice to TDEA on Policies and Procedures

On the basis of input and feedback received from senior project staff (e.g. Director Finance, Grants and Compliance), the compliance team of AASR and the capacity building teams, the Project team continued to extend useful advice to the management of TDEA for improving the existing policies and procedures. Feedback was also given to the relevant staff of the Project and TDEA in the course of informal interactions, trainings, official meetings, and formal requests by the project management. In the first year, the advice extended covered areas like the need of developing a policy conformity framework between the TDEA policies and USAID regulations, office hours, employee contracts, procurement process, need of relatively greater autonomy/ powers for the project management, and disaster recovery and business continuity plan.

Besides offering advice, both the AASR and TAF teams helped the project staff in revising or improving various templates, forms, processes and documentation procedures in order to make them compliant with USAID regulations. The relevant areas included procurement forms, EPLS checks for procurements, confidentiality and conflict of interest certification, goods receiving note, procurement tracker forms, bid analysis, RFQ, GRN, employment contract form, next of kin form, timesheets, and payroll management.

6.2. Capacity Building of Grantees

In the first year, both TAF and AASR continued to make preparations for the capacity building of potential grantees under the project. These preparations included the following steps:

6.2.1 Research on Accountability Mechanism

In view of the significant focus of the Project on strengthened accountability, the project management felt that it would be important to provide practical and specific information about the existing accountability mechanisms to participants of the quick impact training workshops. It was also decided that the trainings should include adequate content about the themes announced in various cycles, including information about relevant laws, rules, procedures and mechanisms established in different sectors for the purpose of accountability and grievance redress. This required background research to inform the process of development of training manual as well as the delivery of trainings. In view of this, TAF engaged services of consultants to undertake the required researches with focus on sectors like water, energy, law and order, health, education and municipal services. Before the end of June, the reports on energy, water and law and order sectors had been finalized; while the research work on other researches was also in progress and was being monitored.

6.2.2 Curriculum for Quick Impact Trainings

Citizens' Voice Project envisaged capacity building of the sub-grantees through quick impact trainings with a focus on the proposed thematic areas of the project. In this regard, first of all, there was a need to develop the curriculum and training manuals. For this purpose, detailed TORs for the job and an advertisement for training module development was published on 1st January 2012 in the daily newspaper Dawn and [www.hrdn.net.](http://www.hrdn.net) The TORs included detailed training manual for the sub-grantees on accountability mechanisms in relation to health, education and municipal services sectors against the background of 18th amendment. Through a competitive process, a firm namely Empowerment through Creative Integration (ECI) was awarded the consultancy.

Before the end of year, the manual had been finalized after the input of TAF/ project management. The Citizens' Voice Project team also supported ECI in identification of relevant case studies and video links for the curriculum and also provided samples of shortlisted proposals of sub-grantees.

The ECI also carried out a TOT on April 24-27, 2012. It was attended by 10 persons including relevant TAF and project staff.

6.2.3 Organizational Development

The capacity building team of the Project also made progress towards initiating courses on organizational development of non-profit organizations in partnership with private sector educational or training institutions. It is understood that such partnerships would be cost effective and sustainable, as the related educational or training institutions are expected to continue the courses beyond the life of the Project, if the same proved to be based on a viable business model. The trainings through such partnerships are to be delivered to at least two staff members from each sub-grantee organization. Against the support extended to the partner institution, the recommended staff of sub-grantee organizations will receive free trainings; whereas the same trainings could also be offered to others on self-finance basis.

In order to accomplish this task, TAF's capacity building team held exploratory meetings with the relevant staff of numerous training and educational institutions. On the basis of these exploratory meetings and in-house discussions, it appeared that the Project needed to undertake the task in three distinct phases:

- Development of curriculum/ modules for the selected subjects/ courses;
- Identification of appropriate institutions and partnerships; and
- Implementation of courses and related monitoring and evaluation.

In the first year, the capacity building team started simultaneously working on the first two phases. In this context, besides holding exploratory meetings with staff of potential partners, TAF advertised TORs for a consultancy on 20th March 2012 for the development

of training modules. These covered subjects like Project Management, Proposal Writing, strengthening Human Resource, Financial Management, Procurement Systems, Compliance, Communication, Public Outreach Strategies, Leadership Skills, Strategic Planning, and Goal Setting.

For the purpose of identifying appropriate institutions, the capacity building team reviewed the existing training opportunities with focus on organizational development of NGO's/CSO's, especially the ones available through public and private universities, colleges and other institutions. The team also held meetings with almost all stakeholders to get them on board for the purpose. Meetings were held with officials of Higher Education Commission (HEC) as well as with the staff of various institutions in Quetta, Multan, Karachi, Islamabad, Lahore, Mansehra and Peshawar. One of the objectives of these meetings was to orient these institutions about the prospective courses and encourage them to send Expression of Interest (EOIs) in response to the upcoming advertisement for the purpose.

Before the end of June 2012, TAF had awarded a contract to COMSATS for development of training curriculum for longer term trainings through educational/ training institutions as well as for training of trainers (TOT). Besides, TAF had received 27 applications in response to the EOI published on May 31, 2012 for the training courses by educational or training institutions. It is expected that it would be possible to start the longer duration training courses through selected institutions before the end of November in the 2nd year.

On the basis of consultations held with stakeholders, it was felt that it would be better to forge partnerships with private sector institutions, partly because the public sector institutions may not be able to adequately deliver in view of Project's focus on citizens' voice and accountability. It was also determined that the Project will have to proactively engage with the selected institutions to not only facilitate them at various phases but also to build their capacities for delivering the required trainings.

6.3 Other Capacity Building and Supportive Initiatives

Other capacity building and supportive initiatives by TAF and AASR included the following:

- TAF provided technical assistance to TDEA grants team and Secretariat staff about the requirements of FFATA legislation and CCR database updates. These new USG requirements became applicable to the TDEA for being the prime contractor.

- Director, Finance, Grants and Compliance, reviewed and commented on procurement handbook drafted by Procurement Specialist of GT-AASR for the project.

- TAF/ AASR colleagues discussed with TDEA management the importance and methodology for policy conformity analysis, so that projects with different donors could be brought under same organizational policy framework with additional procedures to comply donor specific requirements.

- Director, Finance, Grants and Compliance, reviewed the Scope of Work for Recipient Contracted Audit of the project and submitted suggestions to USAID.

- Director, Finance, Grants and Compliance, worked with TDEA headquarters for several outstanding items with respect to compliance with USAID rules and regulations and post award conditions in the contract between USAID and TDEA.

7. Communications and External Relations

The Communications and the External Relations Unit is responsible for all matters related to, among others, branding, media relations, official correspondence, project reports, outreach, managing website and organizing events. In the reporting period, the Unit performed a range of activities including the following:

7.1 Branding and Marking Plan

The Branding and Marking Plan was developed and submitted to the USAID on September 7, 2011. It was later revised in light of feedback from the USAID as well as TDEA Secretariat/ Board, and was re-submitted to USAID for approval on January 10, 2012. Its final approval, however, has been delayed due to the pending request of TDEA to the USAID that co-branding should be allowed to TDEA. In this context, on behalf of the Executive Council of TDEA, a letter was also submitted to the Democracy and Governance Office in January 2012.

7.2 Designing and Development of Outreach Materials

Despite the pending decision on TDEA's request for co-branding, the Unit prepared, designed, printed and disseminated necessary materials for the purpose of communication and outreach. These included the following:

- Stationary items like letterheads, folders, notepads and envelops, etc.
- Website content;
- Project brochure in English;
- FAQs in English;
- Project brochure and FAQs were translated into Urdu for publication with the aim for greater outreach;
- Project Fact Sheets; and
- Fact Sheets on each cycle.

In addition, several press releases were prepared and issued in relation to project launch, information sessions, and various grant cycles. These were widely covered by the print and electronic media.

7.3 Grant Cycle Advertisements

The Unit developed and designed advertisements for the first, second and third cycles and, after necessary approvals from USAID, these were published on November 3, 2011, March

4, 2012 and July 1, 2012 in various national dailies. These advertisement were also posted on the Project's website and e-groups, besides their wider dissemination through emails to registered potential grantees.

7.4 Information Sessions

In the reporting period, the project was launched in Islamabad on November 19, 2011. Later, 4 information sessions were held in Lahore, Karachi, Quetta and Multan. Purpose of these events was to share the overall progress of the project as well as information about specific grants cycles, especially about eligibility, terms and conditions, evaluation criteria, proposal development, application submission process, evaluation process and approvals. The information sessions attracted significant media attention and were given wide coverage in both the electronic and print media.

National Launch – Islamabad

Erin Krasik giving a brief of the project at the National Launch

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA) hosted the National Project Launch of the Citizens' Voice Project on Thursday, November 17, 2011, at the Serena Hotel in Islamabad, Pakistan. USAID/Pakistan Mission Director Dr. Andrew Sisson was the Chief Guest.

A total of 425 people attended the event; including potential grant applicants from all four provinces as well as representatives of the civil society, government, donor community and media outlets. Some key officials from the Government of Pakistan, including the Federal Tax Ombudsman, participated in the launching event. The international and donor organizations represented at the event included, amongst others, DFID, CIDA and the United Nations.

The key speakers at the launch included Ms. Erin Krasik (Deputy Director of the USAID/Pakistan Office of Democracy and Governance), Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ali (Chief of Party, Citizens' Voice Project), Ms. Mossarat Qadeem (Chairperson, TDEA), and Dr. Andrew Sisson (USAID/Pakistan Mission Director).

Dr. Andrew Sission along with Mukhtar Ahmad Ali & Mossarat Qadeem talking to the media

Dr. Sisson, Mr. Mukhtar Ali and Ms. Qadeem also responded to various questions raised by the media about the Project. Video excerpts from this session were carried on several national news channels.

Technical Staff from the Citizens' Voice Project and USAID held a question-and-answer session for potential grant applicants, which covered a wide range of questions regarding

eligibility criteria, project objectives and themes, geographical outreach, and application procedures.

Information Session -- Lahore

Mr. Waseem Ashraf inaugurating the Provincial Information Session

The first Provincial Information Session of the Project was held on Monday, November 21, 2011, at the Pearl Continental Hotel in Lahore. The U.S Consul General, Ms. Nina Fite, was the Chief Guest at the event. A total of 250 people attended the event, including 200 potential grant applicants from Punjab as well as representatives of 25 media outlets. Participants also included government officials, academicians and civil society members.

Mr. Waseem Ashraf (Democracy and Governance Specialist of the USAID/Pakistan Lahore Office), Mr. Mudassir Rizvi (Chief Executive Officer of TDEA), Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ali (Chief of Party), and Ms. Nina Fite were the key speakers.

Information Session -- Karachi

The second Provincial Information Session of the Project was held on Friday, November 25, 2011, at the Avari Towers Hotel in Karachi. The US Consul General, Mr. William Martin, was the Chief Guest. A total of 183 people attended the event, including 164 potential grant applicants from Sindh and 18 representatives of media outlets. Mr. Syed Sardar Ahmed, Senior Minister of Sindh Government, also attended the information session and shared his views.

Mr. Javed Jabbar addressing the participants of the orientation session

Mr. Nazeer Mahar (Governance Advisor at USAID/Pakistan Democracy & Governance Office), Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ali (Chief of Party), Mr. Javed Jabbar (Former Senator and Federal Minister), Mr. Edward Birgells (Regional Director Sindh and Baluchistan, USAID), Ms. Erin Krasik (Deputy Director, USAID/Pakistan Democracy & Governance Office) and Mr. William Martin were the key speakers at the event.

Information Session -- Peshawar

Initially, the information session in Peshawar was scheduled for November 23, 2011, but it had to be postponed just a day prior to the event in view of security concerns raised by the USAID. It was rescheduled for November 29, 2011 but it had to be cancelled due to the security situation, which developed after the killing of Pakistani soldiers by NATO forces on the Pak-Afghan Border.

Information Session - Quetta

An information session was held on Monday, March 19, 2012 at the Serena Hotel in Quetta. Mr. Nasrullah Barech, who is a Board Member of TDEA from Balochistan, chaired the event.

A total of 145 participants attended the event including 107 potential grant applicants from the province as well as representatives of 15 media outlets. Government officials, who participated in the session included DG Planning, Mr. Zahid Saleem, and Director Operations of NCHD,

Mukhtar Ahmad Ali giving project overview and information regarding Second Grants Cycle

Mr. Anwar Saleem Kansi. Representatives of several international organizations working in Balochistan also attended the event. Some of the potential grantees had travelled from neighboring districts to participate in the event.

Information Session – Multan

Multan Information Session

The second Information Session was held at the Ramada Hotel in Multan on Thursday, March 22, 2012. Mr. Nazeer Mahar, Advisor Democracy and Governance USAID chaired the event.

A total of 224 people attended the event including 156 potential grant applicants from the province as well as representatives of 21 media outlets. Representatives of several international organizations working in Multan also attended the event. Most of the potential grantees had travelled from neighboring districts to participate in the event.

8. Challenges

In the reporting period, the Project faced and dealt with numerous challenges, which affected the established timelines and realization of set targets:

8.1. It took significant time to finalize sub-contracts with the sub-contractors (i.e. TAF and AASR-GT), as a number of technical issues needed to be resolved involving multiple offices like TDEA, USAID, local offices of TAF and AASR, and then the head-office of TAF. These issues related to, among others, exchange rate/ currency of payments, NICRA, and

jurisdictions for the purpose of dispute resolutions. However, these issues were resolved and sub-contracts were signed in late August 2011 and early September 2011.

8.2. TDEA faced the liquidity problem, which caused certain delays in procurements. However, the problem was addressed through reliance on endowment funds, credit from vendors, and the approval of working capital advance by the USAID in August 2011.

8.3. It was a challenge to fill certain key vacant positions on the project in view of higher salary demands and better opportunities, which would become available to short-listed or even engaged staff. However, the project addressed this challenge through improvements in its recruitments process and, at times, by seeking USAID approvals for relatively higher salaries. By the end of June 2012, the project was almost fully staffed, as only a few positions were vacant.

8.4. In response to the request for applications for 24 grants in the first grants cycle, the Project received 156 validly submitted applications; whereas for 37 grants in the 2nd grants cycle, 131 applications were received. Despite significant outreach efforts by the Project, there was a weak response, particularly in relation to non-traditional themes like legislative governance, tax collection sector, and governance of NPOs. It can be partly due to weak civil society capacities in the area of voice and accountability, especially in newer themes. This challenge was being addressed through improvements in the outreach efforts, feedback to unsuccessful applicants and, in the future, training workshops for potential grantees on proposal development.

No.	Theme	No. of Grants Announced	Applications received (Complete applications)
1	Citizen Oversight of Municipal Services	10	95
2	Energy Sector Reforms	10	28
3	Improving Water Rights	4	28

Applications received for the 2nd grants cycle

No	Theme	No. of grants announced	Applications received
1	Advocacy for Strengthening Legal Framework for NPOs	2	4
2	Citizens' Voice for Effective Legislative Governance	15	29
3	Citizens' Voice and Public Accountability in Tax Collection Sector	10	9
4	Education Sector Reforms	10	89
		37	131

8.5. The quality of most of the received grant applications in the first and second grant cycles was weak, and reflected the limited capacity of applicant organizations in terms of developing competitive applications. It is evident from the fact that, in the first grants cycle, only 23 applications could obtain the qualifying marks (i.e. 60). After further processing, the Project could recommend only 18 applications for award against the 24 grants that had been advertised. Similarly, in the second cycle, 21 applications received more than 60 marks, while the project could recommend 17 applications for the award of grants. This situation calls for innovative approaches in terms of evaluating applications, establishing partnerships, awarding grants and capacity building of not just the grantees but also of potential grantees. By the end of June 2012, the project management was reviewing the data of two grant cycles to suggest appropriate changes in the eligibility criteria, evaluation criteria and solicitation process.

8.6. In the first grants cycle, the Project took about 6-8 weeks for evaluations (after the closing date) including pre-award assessments, GMC and PSC approvals, revisions of applications in the light of GMC/ PSC comments and submission to the USAID. The time taken was higher than expected, partly because it was the first cycle and, therefore, the project management needed to consider and clarify several aspects of the process. Other factors included time required for pre-award assessments, revision of applications in the light of GMC/ PSC comments and PSC approval. The project management continuously reviewed the process and took steps to ensure that the evaluation process takes considerably less time in the following cycles. Actually, the times taken for the second grant cycle was less than the first one, and it was likely to further improve in the following cycles.

8.7. The overall security situation and political uncertainty continued to affect the project directly or indirectly. In particular, such environmental factors had to be factored in the decisions relating to outreach, monitoring plans, results framework and even program development. Nevertheless, the project management and staff were able to make progress despite this challenge in view of their local knowledge and through necessary modifications of project interventions.

8.8. TDEA is a local organization, which is entirely staffed by Pakistani staff. It is for the first time that it is managing the project of this nature and size and, therefore, it needed to develop and implement a range of policies, systems, procedures and manuals anew. When the progress of the first year is examined with this background in view, it has been more than satisfactory, as the project was not only fully mobilized but grants making process also initiated within the first six months. Besides, the efforts made by the TDEA management and through the project lead to improvement of TDEA's risk rating from high to medium within the first year. The project management is confident that more than five cycles of grants can be managed in the second year, which could lead to substantial increase in

activities aimed at improved voice and accountability on the ground through substantially higher number of grantees.